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ABSTRACT

This action guide helps teachers understand student differences from an environmental and contextual perspective, explaining how to better engage students in the learning process so they can increase their academic performance. The guide focuses on students who are African American, American Indian, Mexican American, and Hmong. Section 1, "Introduction: A Vision of the Future," presents underlying assumptions and explains the guide's goals. Section 2, "Understanding Cultural Backgrounds," discusses culture as the backdrop for learning, focusing on African American, American Indian, Mexican American, and Asian American cultural styles and cultural style in the schools. Section 3, "Understanding How Culture Influences Motivation," explains how to create a culturally compatible classroom and offers an example of a culturally responsible learning community. Section 4, "Identifying Ways to Structure a Culturally Compatible Classroom," discusses conducting culturally relevant teaching, creating Afrocentric classrooms, developing bilingual classrooms, and developing classrooms for American Indians. Section 5, "Increasing Knowledge of Culturally Compatible Strategies," focuses on culturally responsive environments, culturally responsive curriculum, stylistically responsive instructional strategies, and culturally connected instructional strategies. Two appendixes describe how to keep a reflective journal and present a chart for planning culturally diverse classrooms. (Contains approximately 170 references.) (SM)

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